

What is claimed is:

1. A tire building machine, comprising:

a carcass support on which a carcass is rotatably mounted; and

5 a tread strip feed device via which a tread strip is fed onto the carcass, the tread strip feed device including a linear path support assembly on which a tread strip can be supported in a substantially linear disposition, the path support assembly extending from an end of the tread strip feed device at which a cutting device may perform a cutting operation to another end more closely adjacent the carcass, the tread strip feed device being raisable to a feed position at which the tread strip extends tangentially relative to the carcass for feeding the tread strip thereonto in a tire building process.

10 2. A tire building machine according to claim 1, and further comprising a linkage disposed under the path support assembly of the tread strip feed device and, in particular, in a region underneath the cutting device, the linkage being operable to effect a swing movement of the tread strip feed device.

15 3. A tire building machine according to claim 1, wherein the path support assembly is mounted for swing movement and is moveable toward and away from the carcass.

20 4. A tire building machine according to claim 1, and further

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comprising a sensor mounted on the end of the path support assembly disposed more closely adjacent the carcass, the sensor being operable to sense an approach of the path support assembly and the carcass toward one another.

5. A tire building machine according to claim 1, wherein the path support assembly extends horizontally in a preparation position thereof.

6. A tire building machine according to claim 1, wherein the path support assembly can be displaced to a spacing of at least 20 cm and, preferably, approximately 40 cm, from the carcass.

10 7. A tire building machine according to claim 1, wherein the path support assembly includes conventional rollers which are arranged in a sufficiently closely adjacent relationship to one another that a tread strip rollingly supported thereon cannot substantially hang into the spaces between adjacent rollers.

15 8. A tire building machine according to claim 1, wherein the path support assembly is raisable into a feed position by means of a lifting assembly comprising, in particular, a hydraulic working cylinder and, in particular, the parameters of the lifting operation are determined as a function of the carcass diameter sensed by the sensor.